

Application No.: 10/024,544**Docket No.: 2038-282****AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A body fluid absorbent wearing article, comprising:
a liquid-pervious topsheet;
a liquid-impervious backsheet;
a liquid-absorbent panel disposed between said topsheet and said backsheet;
said panel comprising a first fibrous assembly sub-panel lying on a side of said topsheet and having a compressive restoring elasticity, and a substantially flat second fibrous assembly sub-panel underlying said first fibrous assembly sub-panel;
said first fibrous assembly sub-panel having opposite upper and lower sides, the upper side being adjacent said topsheet, the lower side being further from said topsheet than the upper side, said first fibrous assembly sub-panel comprising on the lower side thereof a substantially flat portion spaced from said second fibrous assembly sub-panel by a first given dimension and a plurality of protuberant portions extending from said flat portion toward said second fibrous assembly panel so as to bear against said second fibrous assembly sub-panel; and
said first fibrous assembly sub-panel having a fiber density increasing progressively toward said second fibrous assembly sub-panel which has a fiber density higher than that of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel.
2. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein said first fibrous assembly sub-panel has a plurality of wall portions each extending from said flat portion toward said second fibrous assembly sub-panel, being spaced from said second

Application No.: 10/024,544Docket No.: 2038-282

fibrous assembly sub-panel by a second given dimension smaller than said first dimension, and serving to connect one pair of the adjacent protuberant portions with each other.

3. (previously presented) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 2, wherein said first fibrous assembly sub-panel has a fiber density of 0.03-0.10 g/cm³ in said flat portion and a fiber density of 0.05-0.15 g/cm³ in said protuberant portions as well as in said wall portions, and said second fibrous assembly sub-panel has a fiber density of 0.10-0.50 g/cm³.

4. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein

said first fibrous assembly sub-panel comprises hydrophilic thermoplastic synthetic resin fiber which constitutes ~~70-100~~ from 70 to less than 100 wt % of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel and cellulose fiber which constitutes no more than 30 wt% of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel; and

said second fibrous assembly sub-panel comprises said synthetic resin fiber which constitutes no more than 50 wt% of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel and said cellulose fiber which constitutes ~~50-100~~ from 50 to less than 100 wt % of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel.

5. (previously presented) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein said second fibrous assembly sub-panel comprises at least one of fibrous or granular super-absorptive polymer which constitutes no more than 50 wt% of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel.

6. (previously presented) A body fluid absorbent wearing article, comprising:
a liquid-pervious topsheet;
a liquid-impervious backsheet; and
a liquid-absorbent panel disposed between said topsheet and said backsheet;

Application No.: 10/024,544

Docket No.: 2038-282

said panel comprising a first fibrous assembly sub-panel underlying said topsheet and a second fibrous assembly sub-panel underlying said first fibrous assembly sub-panel;

said first fibrous assembly sub-panel having a plurality of protuberant portions extending away from said topsheet and toward said second fibrous assembly panel so as to bear against said second fibrous assembly sub-panel;

said second fibrous assembly sub-panel having a fiber density higher than that of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel.

7. (previously presented) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 6, wherein

said first fibrous assembly sub-panel further has a plurality of wall portions each being spaced from said second fibrous assembly sub-panel and connecting one pair of adjacent said protuberant portions with each other;

said first fibrous assembly sub-panel has a fiber density of 0.05-0.15 g/cm³ in said protuberant portions as well as in said wall portions; and

said second fibrous assembly sub-panel has a fiber density of 0.10-0.50 g/cm³.

8. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 6, wherein said first fibrous assembly sub-panel has a surface which faces the topsheet and which is generally flat throughout an entire area thereof, said entire area being encompassed by the periphery of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel.

9. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 8, wherein

said first fibrous assembly sub-panel further has a base portion having

an upper surface defining said generally flat surface of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel, and

Application No.: 10/024,544Docket No.: 2038-282

an opposite, lower surface from which said protuberant portions extend downwardly, extending from an opposite surface of said base portion toward said second fibrous assembly sub-panel; and

a fiber density of said protuberant portions is higher than that of said base portion and lower than the fiber density of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel.

10. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 9, wherein said first fibrous assembly sub-panel further has a plurality of wall portions each extending from the lower surface of the base portion toward said second fibrous assembly sub-panel, being spaced from said second fibrous assembly sub-panel, and connecting one pair of adjacent said protuberant portions with each other;

a fiber density of said wall portions is higher than that of said base portion and lower than the fiber density of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel.

11. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 10, wherein the opposite lower surface of said base portion includes a plurality of areas each being completely surrounded by a number of said protuberant portions and said wall portions, wherein adjacent said areas are separated by at least one said protuberant portion or at least one said wall portion.

12. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 6, wherein

said first fibrous assembly sub-panel further has a base portion having

an upper surface which is adjacent said topsheet, and

an opposite, lower surface from which said protuberant portions extend toward said second fibrous assembly sub-panel; and

a fiber density of said protuberant portions in regions where said protuberant portions

Application No.: 10/024,544

Docket No.: 2038-282

~~contact is higher than that of said base portion and lower than the fiber density of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel~~ is higher than a fiber density at any point on the upper surface of said base portion.

13. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 12, wherein

the fiber density of said base portion is in a range of 0.03-0.10 g/cm³;

the fiber density of said protuberant portions is in a range of 0.05-0.15 g/cm³; and

the fiber density of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel is in a range of 0.10-0.50 g/cm³ ~~in a range of.~~

14. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 12, wherein said first fibrous assembly sub-panel further has a plurality of wall portions each extending from the lower surface of the base portion toward said second fibrous assembly sub-panel, being spaced from said second fibrous assembly sub-panel, and connecting one pair of adjacent said protuberant portions with each other;

a fiber density of said wall portions is higher than the fiber density at any point on the upper surface of ~~that of~~ said base portion and lower than the fiber density of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel.

15. (previously presented) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 6, wherein said second fibrous assembly sub-panel contacts said first fibrous assembly sub-panel only at lower ends of said protuberant portions, thereby preventing bodily discharge that has been transferred to said second fibrous assembly sub-panel from flowing back to the first fibrous assembly sub-panel.

16-21. (canceled)

Application No.: 10/024,544

Docket No.: 2038-282

22. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein ~~the upper side of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel is~~ has opposite sides one of which is adjacent the topsheet and flat throughout an entire area thereof, said entire area being encompassed by the periphery of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel.

23. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein an entire thickness of fiber material of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel in the flat portion is less than in the protuberant portions.

24. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein the fiber density of said protuberant portions is ~~higher than that of said flat portion and~~ lower than the fiber density at any point of said second fibrous assembly sub-panel.

25. (canceled)

26. (currently amended) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim [[1]] 2, wherein
~~said first fibrous assembly sub-panel has opposite sides one of which is adjacent the topsheet;~~

the substantially flat portion on the opposite lower side of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel [[has]] comprises multiple flat areas each being completely surrounded by a number of said protuberant portions and said wall portions, wherein adjacent said areas are unconnected and separated by at least one said protuberant portion or at least one said wall portion.

27. (previously presented) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein said second fibrous assembly sub-panel contacts said first fibrous assembly sub-panel

Application No.: 10/024,544**Docket No.: 2038-282**

only at lower ends of said protuberant portions, thereby preventing bodily discharge that has been transferred to said second fibrous assembly sub-panel from flowing back to the first fibrous assembly sub-panel.

28. (canceled)

29. (new) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 1, wherein said panel consists of said first and second fibrous assembly sub-panels.

30. (new) A body fluid absorbent wearing article, comprising:
a liquid-pervious topsheet;
a liquid-impervious backsheet; and
a liquid-absorbent panel disposed between said topsheet and said backsheet, said liquid-absorbent panel comprising:
a first fibrous assembly sub-panel underlying the topsheet; and
a second fibrous assembly sub-panel underlying said first fibrous assembly sub-panel;
said first fibrous assembly sub-panel having a base portion adjacent said topsheet and a plurality of protuberances extending from a lower surface of said base portion toward said second fibrous assembly panel so as to bear against said second fibrous assembly sub-panel;
wherein an upper surface of said base portion includes generally flat regions which correspond to and are located above said protuberances and which are free of depressions.

31. (new) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 30, wherein the upper surface of said base portion is generally flat throughout an entire area thereof, said entire area being encompassed by the periphery of said first fibrous assembly sub-panel.

32. (new) The body fluid absorbent wearing article according to claim 31, wherein

Application No.: 10/024,544Docket No.: 2038-282

a fiber density of said protuberant portions in regions where said protuberant portions contact said second fibrous assembly sub-panel is higher than a fiber density at any point on the upper surface of said base portion; and

said second fibrous assembly sub-panel has a fiber density higher than that of said protuberant portions.

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